



Trust Line for Women

0 8008 8008

Analytical operating
report



ROYAL DANISH MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



International Center for Women Rights
Protection and Promotion "La Strada"

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The report represents the results of one year of activity of the Trust Line for Women **0 8008 8008**. This service was promoted in the framework of a large public awareness campaign “Healthy family is one without violence”, a campaign conducted with the support of the project “Protection and Empowerment of Victims of Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence”, implemented by the United Nations Development Program, UN Population Fund, Mission in Moldova of the International Organization for Migration, Mission in Moldova of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

International Center for Women Rights Protection and Promotion “La Strada”

President: **Ana Revenco**

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The authors will appreciate further comments and suggestions on the contents of the report that can be sent to the address of the Trust Line for Women.

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Geographical coverage: Republic of Moldova, national service.

Beneficiaries:

- persons suffering from domestic violence, especially women;
- professional groups;
- community members.

The goal of the Trust Line is to promote a non-violent way of life in the family and promote the rights of victims of domestic violence.

Trust Line objectives

- Stabilisation of the psycho-emotional state of victims of domestic violence
- Facilitation of access for victims of domestic violence to adequate assistance
- Informing beneficiaries about rights and obligations of subjects of domestic violence
- Monitoring of the problem of domestic violence in the Republic of Moldova.

What does the Trust Line offer to women?

- Primary psychological counselling for persons who suffer from domestic violence
- Advice and recommendations on how to recognise the first signs of violence in a relation and how to build non-violent relations
- Legal information about provisions of Law nr. 45 on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence
- Information and referral to specialised services for victims of domestic violence.

Operating procedure

- 8.00 — 20.00
- Free calls in the territory of the Republic of Moldova
- Individual consultations
- Confidentiality and anonymity
- Consultations in the Romanian and Russian language

Note on the publication

Telephone service still remains to be the most popular means of information, even in the conditions when the technical and scientific progress has registered rightly spectacular achievements. This is due to the fact that this service is acceptable for everyone and viewed as a tool of discussion, obtaining information and consultation without disclosing ones identity. Out this another way, you can benefit from confidentiality and anonymity.

It is this idea that underlay the establishment and launching of a national telephone service that would offer psychological counselling to persons that suffer from domestic violence in their own families, particularly women. This report basically comes to publish the results of the first year of activity of the Trust Line for Women **0 8008 8008**.

By offering counselling to lady-beneficiaries of the said service, the Trust Line (TL) consultants try to help them recognize the first signs of violence in a relation or build and non-violent relation, relevant provisions of the legislation and how they could possibly benefit from the protection of the law, from adequate assistance in the case of domestic violence. On the basis of the calls received, the authors proceed to the first analysis of the most commonly encountered types of violence, who calls for help, what main services victims of domestic violence might need.

After a year of activity, International Centre “La Strada” comes with the first statements of the state of things from the TL beneficiaries’ perspective, achievements and what other steps should be made in this social segment. The report pictures the most popular types of assistance, as well as the profile of victims of domestic violence, the beneficiaries of this telephone service (the number of calls vs gender, age of TL beneficiaries), difficulties met by beneficiaries of TL/victims of domestic violence when accessing relevant authorities for assistance and necessary protection. Conclusions of the Report are based strictly on the cases reflected in the calls received by the Trust Line for Women and do not claim to be exhaustive.

The Report is intended primarily for professional groups that, due to their competence, are called to contribute to decreasing/elimination of the phenomenon from both social and private life, improve on the opportunities of establishment of services that are crucial for victims of domestic violence. Specialists are encouraged to get inspired from this information, as the message that comes from the beneficiaries of TL in conditions of anonymity and confidentiality actually reflects the quality of our services, professionals, most efficiently and we should draw on this information in order to raise the efficiency of our practical activity.

The Report’s authors are far from regarding this analysis as an impeccable one and will highly appreciate possible suggestions (including critics), advice, proposals on continuous improvement of this service that is essential for those who have reached an impasse and need support of the community, of relevant authorities and, finally, just of those who are around.

I. Characteristics of calls received at the Trust Line for Women

In the period of November 2009 — September 2010, 1,099 calls were received from a number of categories of citizens from different regions of Moldova with different needs. The general picture of calls allows proceeding to the first analysis of the calls and, implicitly, of the phenomenon of domestic violence. At the same time, this analysis offers a possibility of drawing an initial outline of the paradigm of types of assistance that most beneficiaries of the Trust Line for Women need.

Table 1. Calls received at the Trust Line

Month	Calls from victimse	Calls from aggressors	Calls from community members on cases of domestic violence	Calls from professional groups on cases of domestic violence	Other	TOTAL CALLS
October	3	—	—	—	—	3
November	74	—	23	2	6	105
December	96	—	21	—	22	139
January	103	—	10	1	8	122
February	45	—	15	2	12	74
March	69	—	16	4	2	91
April	48	—	9	—	4	61
May	137	—	19	3	13	172
June	86	—	24	2	14	126
July	63	1	18	2	3	87
August	50	—	19	1	6	76
September	22	1	13	4	3	43
Total	796	2	187	21	99	1099

In the following chapters, we made a proposal to think of a general characteristic for the calls received at the TL, as well as some more detailed aspects 2010¹ (see Table 1).

¹The Report reflects the period of November 2009 — September 2010, the implementation period of the first stage of the national general public awareness campaign “Healthy family is one without violence”, with the Trust line being the campaign’s primary efficiency indicator.

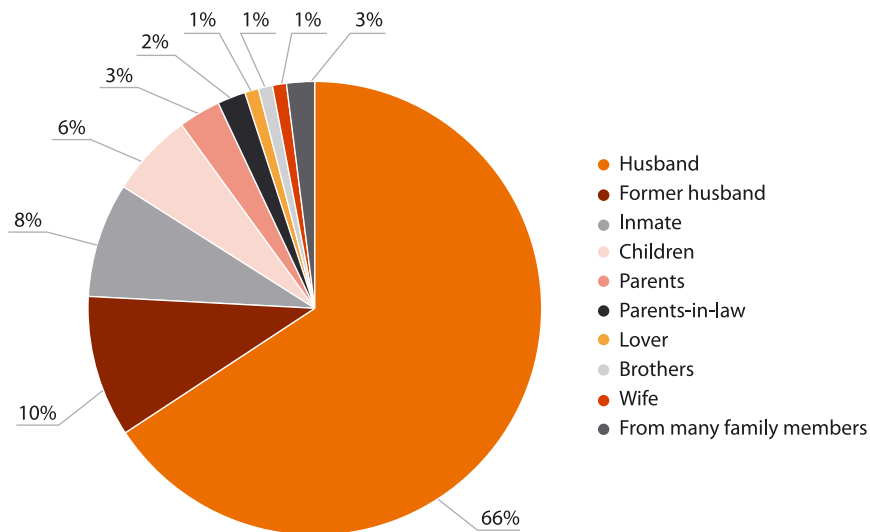
Those 1,099 calls can be divided into 5 categories: calls from victims (796 calls), from aggressors (2 calls), from community members (187 calls), from professional groups (21 calls) and calls from the "Other" category that reflects a number of problems of addressees that are not related to the phenomenon of domestic violence.

Thus, 1,000 calls that are directly related to the problem of domestic violence reflect 791 cases reported by both victims and community members or professional groups, where the remaining 209 calls represent repeated calls.

Calls from victims

Most calls from victims (792 calls) come from **women** subject to various abuses from their husbands (66%), former husbands (10%), inmates (8%), children (6%), parents (3%), parents-in-law (2%), lovers (1%), brothers (1%), as well as from many family members (2%) (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Distribution of cases by persons who provoke violence

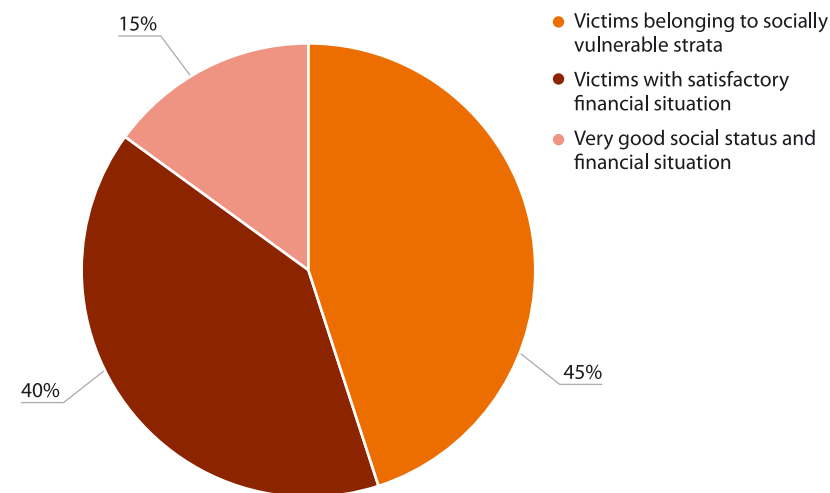


It should be noted that 10% of victims that accessed our line, though being divorced, are still subject to violence. Thus, 71% of them continue living together with the aggressor. Women justify their choice by absence of separate housing.

Another 29% of victims, though living separately from their former husbands, continue being abused. This happens because the abusers, yet geographically separated, feel a need to exert control and power over the former wife.

Of the total number of victims, about 45% come from socially vulnerable strata (both spouses are unemployed or seasonally unemployed, do not have profession, do not have education), 40% indicated satisfactory financial situation, the remaining 15% mentioned very good financial situation. This does not mean that persons having a well-paid job, high social status or high qualification cannot be victims of this phenomenon (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Distribution of victims by their financial situation



Thus, **victims, women from vulnerable families, 45%**, have different ages (16-55 years old) and come from different regions of the country. Basically, these persons easier autoidentify themselves as victims of domestic violence. When accessing the TL, they confirm having already numerous applied to the police, local public authorities (LPA). Frequent and open manifestations of violence (quarrels and noise heard quite in the receiver) lead to marginalisation of women and children in the locality. Lack of money, lack of support from relatives (most often parents are alcohol addicts, abusers) and from the authorities, lack of a hostel determines these women's decision to accept the role of a victim. The emotional sphere is so inhibited, traumas are so deeply rooted that they do not even recognise the importance of psychological assistance.

Most often they avoid discussing their emotional state asking for “real” help: *“Leave it. How can you really help me?”* Some women-addressees recognize developing violence reaction against their children in response to their husband’s violence.

The second category is represented by persons with satisfactory financial status — 40%. Women from this category mostly have special secondary or higher education, working in the social or production sphere. Sources of income in these families are, particularly, salaries, allowances, money earned while working abroad, relatives’ and parents’ assistance or other types of income, which allows them to have a decent life, but only in the case of combination of the income of both spouses. Common property — a house, car, land plot etc. — keeps them “bound” to the household. At the same time, shame, “public talking”, embarrassment, existence of children that need to be supported, as well as threats of death and fear generate state of anxiety in the victim that gradually takes pathological forms.

The number of victims with good social and financial status, about 15%, as well as messages from relatives and professional groups, demonstrate that violence occurs also in these families, yet with different forms of manifestation and perception of this phenomenon. In these families, violence is hidden not to affect the name, not to lose relations, and job. In 80% of these cases, victims are 30-45 years old, have children and common property with their husbands, are too much subordinated to their extended family. They are threatened to be deprived of home, money, children, to suffer after the divorce. Violence in these families is more complex and more organised.

Psychological problems of partners are intensified by financial and social losses involved. Addressees, women from favoured strata, with a high level of training, are those who understand the value of psychological support, perceive consequences of violence in all their complexity.

We can mark out from the calls’ analysis that a part of victims, both with a satisfactory and good financial situation, have deep psychological dependence on the abuser. They do not choose to break the circle of violence, stating that they would not get along without the aggressor. Yet, paradoxically, it is exactly them who support the whole family (have a decent salary or money earned from work abroad, are owners of real estate, are the only persons in the family that have a stable income).

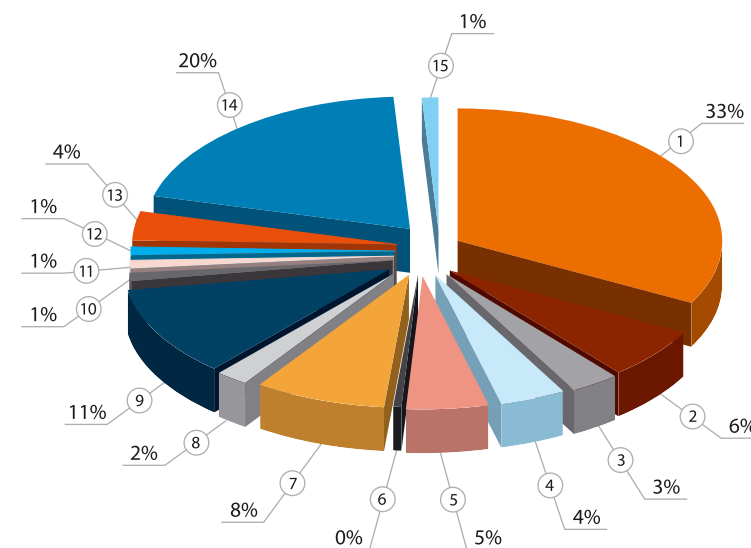
A separate category of TL’ women-beneficiaries, victims of domestic violence, are elderly women abused by their own sons (this category is described in sub-chapter Distribution of calls by age).

Anyway, regardless of the status, education, place of residence, and age women-victims of violence, TL addressees, have some common characteristics: most often they come from violent families; were witnesses or victims of violence in the origin family; do not have plans for the future; reveal low self-esteem; deep victimisation is manifested (emotional dependence on the aggressor, incapable of making changes). Thus, even if they recognise the effect of violence over themselves and their children, they choose not to produce any changes, with no justification for the choice — 20%.

Others invoke the following reasons: lack of housing (141 cases) or financial incapacity without the partner (24 cases); wants to have a husband (12 cases) or feels pity for him, he will get lost without her (17 cases); children should have a father (19 cases) or children do not allow them to divorce (2 cases), she is ashamed (32 cases) or affected by parents to salvage the family (8 cases). Some believe that their partners would change in time (48 cases) or give arguments like: *“when sober, he is nice”* (4 cases). Four victims stated that they were *too old to change anything*. There are abused women who are ready to break the circle of violence, but do not have financial resources to start the divorce process (5 cases). There is a tendency when inmates refuse to leave the house on the woman’s insistence and continue to abuse her (15 cases).

Women that are threatened of death (85 cases) or of burning the house (3 cases) in case they leave the abuser are in a more complicated situation (see Fig. 3).

Fig. 3. Reasons invoked by the victim in favor of staying with the aggressor



1. Absence of housing premises (141)
2. Not being able to get along financially without the partner (24)
3. Wants to have a husband (12)
4. Pities him, will get lost without her (17)
5. Children should have a father (19)
6. Children do not allow divorcing (2)
7. Is ashamed (32)
8. Parents insist on salvaging the family (8)
9. He will change in time (48)
10. “When sober, he is nice” (4)
11. “I am too old to change anything” (4)
12. Do not have financial resources to start the divorce process (5)
13. The inmate refuses to leave the house on the woman’s insistence, continues to abuse her (15)
14. Threats of death (85)
15. Will put the household on fire, if she leaves the abuser (3)

Calls from aggressors

Though, by its very definition, the Trust Line is intended for women, as they are considered to be victims of domestic violence in most of the cases, we did not yet disregard cases coming from aggressors, even though, in this period, only 2 calls were registered. Interest towards these calls from this category is absolutely natural: **reasons for aggressing the victim**, aggressors being men in most of the cases?

A husband came to aggress his wife because of her excessive consumption of alcohol, having lost her job, and not assuming any responsibility in the household. The second aggressor abuses his wife psychologically. Both know their mistakes and are highly motivated to improve relations with their wives and, by accessing the TL, they request services of a qualified specialist.

Calls/messages from community members

A separate category of calls (187 in total) are those received from community members (relatives, neighbours, friends), who basically signal cases of domestic violence in relatives' families (mother's, daughter's, sister's-in-law etc.), as well as neighbours; in most cases addressees request information on how to intervene efficiently in these situations.

Out of 187 calls received, 13 calls come from men, who want to help their relatives, particularly mothers and/or daughters (see details about this category of men-beneficiaries in sub-chapter *Distribution of calls by gender*).

174 calls were registered from female community members. Essentially, calls are received from mothers over 45 y.o., as they seem incapable of intervening in the life of their daughters or grand-children who suffer consequences of violence. At the other pole, daughters-addressees (35%) are those young ladies who have broken away from violent atmosphere (make studies in other locality/have recently married) and want to help their mother to break the circle of violence that was consolidated by many years of the need to educate children in the presence of both parents, to have a good name among acquaintances/relatives.

It should be marked out that an addressee calling for a relative most often needs emotional support from a TL consultant, as she lives intensely the drama of those who are close to her. Moreover, many of these women-beneficiaries speak not only on behalf of the victim, but also from themselves, as they suffer from violence in their own family, but have no courage to ask for assistance openly (we mark this tendency among young beneficiaries, 20-30 years old).

Calls/messages from professional groups

21 calls were registered from representatives of professional groups (a man and 20 women). They make various professional categories from many regions of the country, primarily from regional centres and the Chisinau municipality: lawyers, social workers, NGO managers, healthcare workers, journalists, psychologists, volunteers, be it for the purpose of requesting the services of the Trust Line for women in particular cases of violence, or for the purpose of establishing a partnership.

Other

Of the total number of 1,099 calls, 99 calls (5 men and 94 women) were made for the purpose of requesting help and information on problems not related to the phenomenon of domestic violence — unsatisfactory healthcare, violation of the right to work, information about safe migration, ways to obtain a credit, offering jobs, violation of the public order, violation of the land law, offering housing, problems with tenants or neighbours, and sexual harassment at work.

A relatively small number of calls that was registered in the "Other" category marks out that the message of TL promotion campaigns was understood correctly by most of the population, while the amplitude of domestic violence boosts expert intervention. At the same time, the anonymous and confidential telephone service is visualised as an instrument that can contribute to addressing other problems.

II. Characteristics of calls from the age and gender aspect perspective

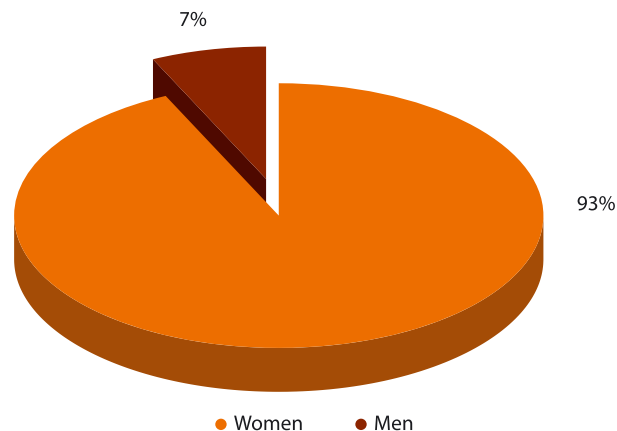
The profile of the Trust Line women- and men-addressees is very broad: an extended range of ages, from 11 to 78, persons with various occupations and different social status (students, unemployed, disabled persons, pensioners, workers, teachers, healthcare workers, housekeepers, cooks, lawyers, military etc.), with different levels of training (from secondary education to post-university studies). Thus, in terms of education, in 56% of cases, victims have only secondary education, 34% - secondary special, and only 10% - higher education.

Next, we will try to give a more detailed description of the profile of addressees from the gender perspective and problems that are encountered at different ages. We are not going to describe social status separately, as in the case of domestic violence, status plays a less significant role and, unfortunately, domestic violence occurs in families with any social status.

Distribution of calls by the gender of addressees

Most persons who accessed the Trust Line are women — 93% and only 7% of addressees are men (see Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. Distribution of calls by the gender of addressees (November 2009 — September 2010)



Women who called us fall in the age range of 11-78. They come from various social environments and have different levels of education, with calls from women from socially-vulnerable strata being predominant. Of those, 792 are victims of domestic violence; 20 of women-addressees belong to different professional groups, 174 women called also as members of the community. The other 94 calls from women are related to other problems and have nothing to do with domestic violence.

A big number of women, who access the TL, confirm the fact that domestic violence still has a pronounced gender character, reflected in prejudices deeply rooted in the population's mentality, where domestic violence is perceived not as a public problem, but more as a private one, with the natural part of life, a normal life style is often reflected in expressions like *"An unwhipped woman is like an unswept house"*, *"Miserable is the house where the hen sings"*, *"This is who wears the hat in this house"*, etc.

Most calls from **men** have the purpose of signalling some cases of violence, with close relatives being the victims: sister, mother, daughter, sister-in-law (10 calls) or friend, neighbour (3 calls). These messages refer to severe cases with danger to the life of persons involved — victimisation is so deeply rooted that women do not even try to change anything, they are too dependent on the aggressor, either severely abused after any attempt to leave the abuser or returning on their own will for different reasons.

Men-addressees are usually brief, some of them inhibited, asking for "concrete" help, for exact indication of steps that need to be taken.

Distribution of calls by the age of addressees

Relevant aspects are revealed also from the analysis of the age of addressees (see Fig. 5 and 6).

Fig. 5. Distribution of calls by age — absolute figures (November 2009 — September 2010)

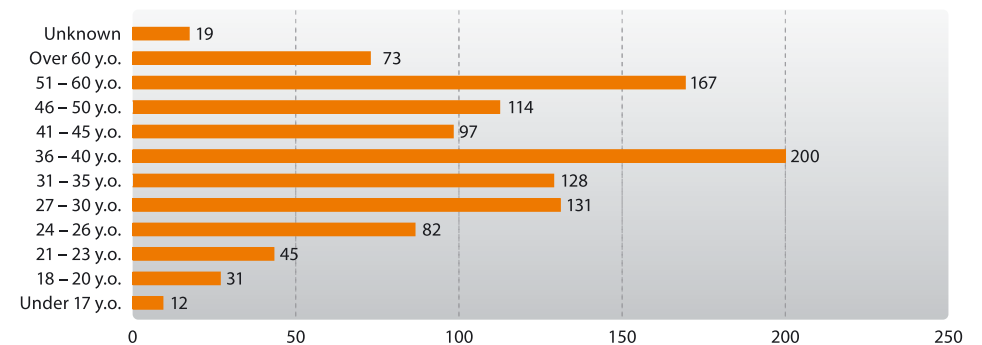
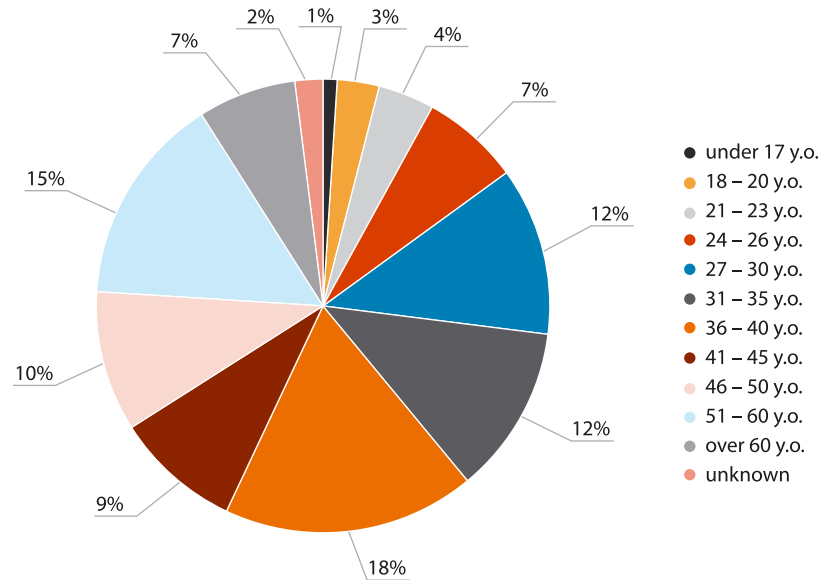


Fig. 6. Distribution of calls by age — percentages (November 2009 — September 2010)



It should be mentioned that there is a correlation between the age of addressees and their problems. Thus, the number of **minor** addressees (including those under 17 y.o.) is relatively small (12 persons). Minors usually call to leave messages about cases of abuse against their mothers, brothers/sisters or when they are victims of violence from alcoholic parents. Some of them feel guilty or even assume responsibility for resolving these situations. Minor girls that accessed the TL get information about first signs of manifestation of violence from a partner and about chances that those would repeat. We should emphasise these minor's (witnesses and victims of violence) maturity in addressing life and family relation issues.

Addressees at the age of **18-26 y.o.** most often call to help a relative, especially mother (women, as well as men) or to solve their own family problems (mostly women).

A significant part of young ladies that access the TL are in a period of courtship by young people. It is exactly at this age that they identify difficulties in establishing harmonious relations with partners (inadequate communication strategies, incompatibility of value systems, where signs of psychological, spiritual and even physical violence originate from). This age category also includes recently married women with emerging problems of adaptability to a new life style, relatives, and friends.

Appearance of the first child is another cause of a starting violence in a young family: in many cases, both spouses adapt hard to the role of parents. Financial problems can also occur. As a mechanism of compensation, the husband (most often) intensifies alcohol consumption, adultery starts, with violence coming next. Women-addressees recognise the problem, but lack of family life experience, dependence on the family of origin makes the woman listen to her parents (*Things will pass... I had the same. Be tolerant...*). In these situations, they stay to accept the condition and hope that everything will change in time.

Calls are also registered where relatives (father/mother) request consultation on the ways of intervention in cases of domestic violence, where their children are victims.

Women-addressees from this age category recognise the problem, but are not ready to introduce changes in their family life or are too much influenced by the environment and make everything possible to satisfy the husband's wishes and avoid violence. Suffering from domestic violence, they are usually very indecisive and strongly need psychological counselling to raise their self-esteem and self-belief.

For a big part of TL beneficiaries **aged between 27 and 35 y.o. (24%)**, domestic violence has already become a life style. They give detailed description of the husband's violent behaviour, the stages of the violent circle, their post-traumatic states. In many cases, the violence circle consists only of violent physical and psychological attacks, determining a predominant number of female beneficiaries from this age category that request shelter when they recognise that their life is in danger.

Many women notify the TL about the consequences of relations with their husbands for the children. Both girls and boys already develop depressive positions, have panic attacks, enuresis, run away from home, consume alcohol excessively. Some develop anxiety of being abandoned, a sense of inferiority. The atmosphere in the family makes them unconfident, some are even terrified of establishing social relations.

Experience of systematic violence develops in some TL lady-beneficiaries somatic diseases or some psychopathologic disorders: hysteria, neurosis, schizophrenia; there occur problems at work. All these make her determined about introducing changes in her life. Thus, many addressees prefer to change the situation: request information about the divorce process, about division of property, request contact details of some lawyers or want to change their partner or themselves and request services of a psychotherapist (mostly women with a high level of education), contact details of alcohol addiction treatment centres.

TL addressees from this age category are those who attempt to break the circle of violence by involving various resources. At the same time, this age category represents beneficiaries that are most decisive about changing the state of things and particularly request legal assistance along with psychological counselling. However, not everyone is successful, after all refusing from changes in favour of emotional dependence from the violent husband.

II. Characteristics of calls from the age and gender aspect perspective

The biggest number of calls to the Trust Line is registered from addressees aged between **36-40 y.o. (18%)**. This category of addressees includes men who ask for assistance for their relatives, professional groups and women-victims of domestic violence. Women-victims of this age have certain particular features that are explained by the coping mechanism that they have chosen for themselves.

At this age, victims are usually resistant to social pressure that had shaped their life when they were young. Most often, these are women that have a job, common property with their husbands, children already grown-up. This is a period of life that is full of contrasts: some women accept the fate of a victim thinking that it is too late to make significant changes, that they are too old to start life from the beginning, and that they do not have where to go. Others, a significantly smaller number, on the contrary, focus on professional fulfilment and supporting children, manage to break the circle of violence, divorce and change the place of living.

A separate group of beneficiaries from this category are women who divorced their husbands, but continue living in a common household. In such cases, the circle of violence does not break, on the contrary, sometimes becomes even more intensive. Women do not leave the place of living common with the aggressor, because they do not have resources to buy other housing premises and cannot reach a compromise regarding real division of property. For many of these women, the divorce is only an illusion of being free, only demonstrating to the aggressor that they can be independent in making decisions. In reality, their dependence from the abuser reaches its maximum.

For the **41-50 age segment (19%)**, two categories of addressees are characteristic. One fourth of these beneficiaries requests intervention for relatives, neighbours, friends, with the rest being focused on their own relations. With children grown-up, mostly gone from home to make studies, it is only now that their focus shifts to husband-wife relations; they state that they were not right at that time when they decided to keep the relations only for the sake of children.

The age of **51 and over 60** is an age of lady-beneficiaries when they are engaged with the life of their own children that have problems in family relations. Some of women-beneficiaries recognise having been victims of domestic violence when they were young, but currently the husband either has severe health problems, or has deceased. Persons that still suffer from violence at this age recognise that they will not change anything in their life, they would not request help for the reason of social status, would not want to affect the life of children who have a position in the society. They just want somebody who does not judge them, who listen to them. Many beneficiaries manifest frustration, disillusion, and talk about unrealised plans, about loneliness, health problems.

A special category of this age includes women-victims, whose abusers are their own sons (3 cases). These are hyper-protective mothers who brought up their only sons themselves fulfilling all their caprices. Upon reaching maturity, they maltreat them (up to hospitalisation with serious injuries) for the purpose of becoming the only owners of housing premises.

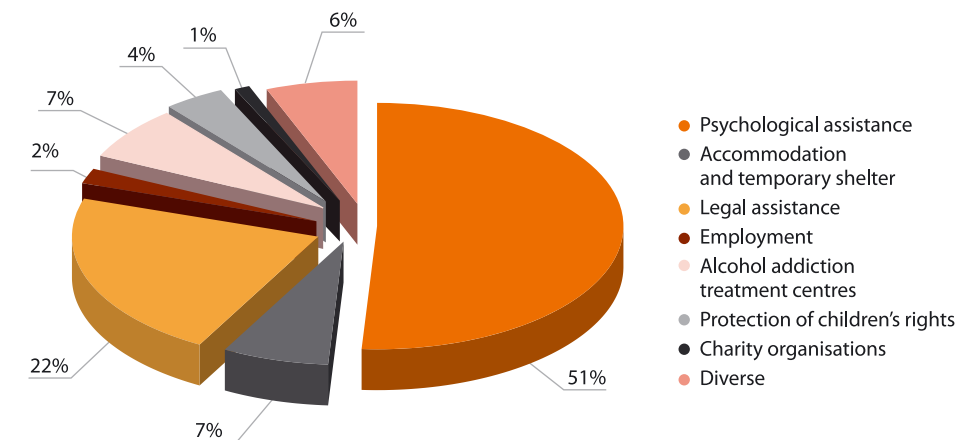
III. Types of assistance requested at the Trust Line for Women

Of **1,099** calls received at the TL, **966** calls were related to the problem of domestic violence against a woman. Respectively, needs were identified and assistance was rendered as follows:

- psychological assistance — in 51% of calls;
- primary legal information — in 22% of calls;
- information about possibilities of accommodation and temporary shelter — in 7% of calls;
- information on possibilities/institutions for treatment of alcohol addiction — in 7% of calls;
- information related to protection of the rights of children — in 4% of calls;
- information on possibilities of employment — in 2% of calls;
- information on possibility of obtaining financial assistance — in 1% of calls.

It should be clarified that in 6% of the total number of calls, the needs of addressees were not related to domestic violence (see Fig. 7).

Fig. 7. Distribution of calls by the needs of addressees (November 2009 — September 2010)



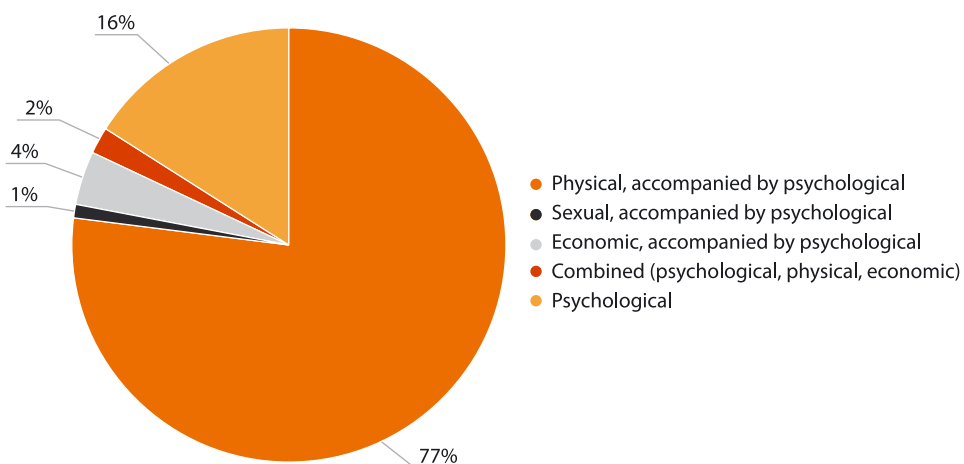
Legal assistance requested in 246 calls, including information about the Protective order offered in 162 call

Psychological assistance (51%)

Based on the content of received calls, in most cases, domestic violence in the families of addressees manifests itself as a combination of physical and psychological violence (77%). Few addressees bring accusations of psychological-sexual violence from partners (1%) and not because of non-existence of such, but because it is considered a taboo topic or even because it is not recognised to be a form of domestic violence.

Economic violence is characteristic for families with good financial status and is identified in 4% of cases. From the calls analysis, cases of combined domestic violence are also identified (2%). At the same time, 16% of the total number of addressees report being subject only to psychological abuse from their partner (see Fig. 8).

Fig. 8. Distribution of calls by type of suffered violence



While the need for psychological assistance is not initially recognised or requested (some women-addressees do not know the TL specifics), we can mention some psychological problems identified in TL beneficiaries: strained relations with one of family members — husband, wife, extended family, parent-children conflicts, post-divorce distress, infidelity of one of the spouses, impossibility of making decisions in difficult situations, suicide, depressions, loneliness.

Primary legal assistance (22%)

Most primary legal information offered to addressees (197 calls) is related to family law: divorce procedure, division of common property, parental rights, information on the Protective order. On the other hand, we have to mention that many specialists are not familiar with the mechanism of application of the Protective order and yet very few are familiar with Law nr. 45-XVI of 1 March 2007 on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence, something that implicitly makes us suppose that there is also poor training in professional groups, which affects the quality of actions aimed at preventing and combating domestic violence.

Accommodation and temporary shelter (7%)

Finding temporary shelter is the kind of assistance that is initially requested by beneficiaries or identified as necessity in the framework of telephone counselling. Temporary accommodation is initially requested by professional groups for their beneficiaries (2 cases) and by addressees who benefited from the services of some accommodation centres (most are from Chisinau municipality). A large proportion of beneficiaries do not know about existence of such centres in our country. Pregnant women in their last quarter, women suffering from violence whose life is endangered or persons who were left without place of living for different reasons are referred to accommodation centres.

Alcohol addiction treatment (7%)

One of the most frequent reasons of violence invoked by the addressees is partner's alcohol dependence. In most of the cases, they do not recognise that they are ill and categorically refuse to turn to a specialist. We mark alcohol addiction problems in very young men, who have just started their family life, as well as in men over 50 y.o., with alcohol addiction being evolved to psychopathological states. Most often, the latter made attempts to treat alcohol addiction, unsuccessfully though.

Alcohol intoxications influence persons' reasonability and behaviour. Cases were also registered when addressees bring accusations about alcohol addiction in women, without an evident violent behaviour however (mother, wife, neighbour, sister-in-law — 4 calls in total).

IV. Difficulties met by women- and men-addressees of the Trust Line in communication with competent authorities

Though the Republic of Moldova already has a law — Law nr. 45-XVI of 1 March 2007 on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence — still many problems are registered in the field of its implementation. Knowledge of the Law on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence, particularly its efficient application by professional groups could decrease acts of violence and maintain self-control in case of victims of domestic violence. In this regard, TL consultants offered information about this law and mechanisms of its implementation to 162 persons. A number of difficulties invoked by women-beneficiaries in their attempts to solve domestic violence situations were registered at the Trust Line. Though the law makes provisions for the responsibilities of a number of professional groups, like representatives of law-enforcement agencies, social services, and healthcare services, we, at the Trust Line, registered calls that reflect mostly difficulties encountered in communication with law-enforcement agencies. For this reason, as we practically do not have relevant data for social and healthcare services, in what follows, we will refer only to difficulties registered in communication with law-enforcement agencies.

Thus, in 161 cases, women-beneficiaries encountered difficulties at the moment of accessing **law-enforcement** agencies. In 93 cases, women-beneficiaries were not satisfied with the police intervention that would reduce to reprimanding or imposing a fine on the aggressor. Most often, complaints come from the fact that the addressee had to pay the fine herself (the husband is unemployed and she is the only person who works in the family). Usually, after such sanctions, the husband's behaviour would not change, but become even more aggressive. There are also cases (2 registered) where policemen did not intervene in the beneficiary's requests for the reason of no severe physical injuries identified. Moreover, in 5 cases, the policeman convinced the victim not to file against the husband for the reason that, in future, children will suffer when trying to find employment or enrol in educational institutions.

It should be mentioned that many women-addressees of the TL refuse to file to the police from the very start for different reasons: do not believe in law-enforcement agencies (38 cases), consider that police intervention would not be efficient and the situation would get worse later (45 cases), consider that this is a private problem and does not require police intervention (21 cases), are afraid of the aggressor (85 cases) or feel ashamed in front of the community (32 cases).

Cases are also registered when police inspectors were aggressors themselves (12 cases), relatives or friends of such, and invoked different reasons in order not to intervene or intervene just “for show”.

Another difficulty in providing assistance to women-beneficiaries of the TL is a small number of **accommodation centres** for women-victims of domestic violence (14, including 7 maternity centres). They have rather low capacity — from 2 to 10 mother-child couples, with some exceptions. Moreover, existing maternity centres determine accommodation of women. Thus, only women with small children (under 3 years old) can be accommodated. Various documents are requested for accommodation (from family doctors, social assistants), something that slows down provision of assistance.

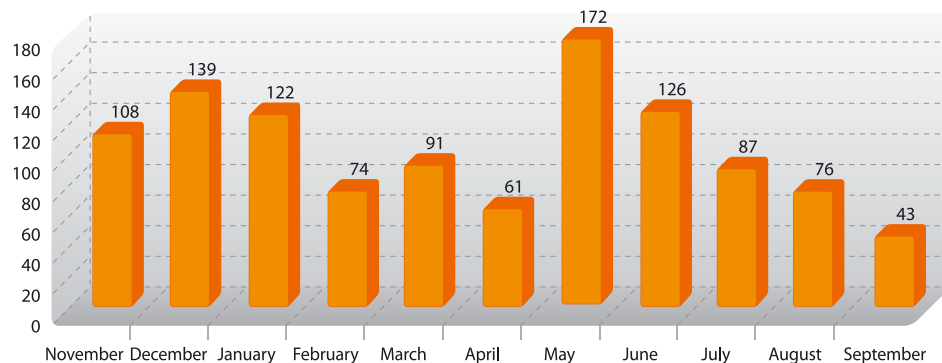
Another deficiency identified from the messages of TL beneficiaries is lack of **legal** services (in 22% of calls). There are few organisations that offer free legal assistance to victims of domestic violence (law on legal services guaranteed by the state in civil cases will come into force in 2012). In the meantime, women-beneficiaries request **free legal assistance**, while existing legal services are concentrated in municipalities and regional centres (Balti, Chisinau, Causeni, Cahul) where there is limited access, especially for beneficiaries from rural localities.

V. Information on distribution of calls to the Trust Line for Women in time

Monthly distribution of calls

Of the total number of 1,099 calls, the largest proportion was registered in December — 139 calls, January — 122 calls, May — 172 calls, and June — 126 calls (see Fig. 9). A similar impact is explained by promotion of the Trust Line through a video-clip that was broadcasted at a number of national and local TV stations, as well as through street advertising. The month of May is a month with the biggest number of calls registered repeatedly, something that marks a long-term impact of TV advertising. Even if people do not react to the video spots immediately, the information eventually gets imprinted in the memory of the general public and, when they need it, women-beneficiaries access the Trust Line.

Fig. 9. Monthly distribution of calls (November 2009 — September 2010)



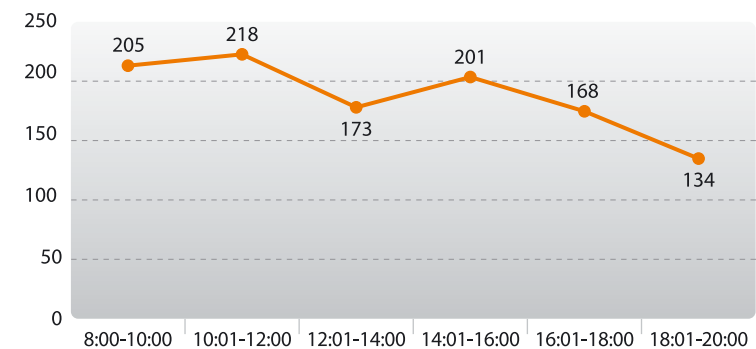
A big number of calls registered in January is conditioned, along with the promotion campaign, by winter holidays that favour family reunions and, respectively, alcohol consumption, which is a starting trigger for acts of violence. Thus, many latent conflicts come to reveal themselves. Growth in the number of calls in May is explained by activities held in this period of time in the framework of the “Family Festival”. Or, in the framework of events held throughout the duration of the festival, there was a lot of discussion about the problem of domestic violence, something that led to a deeper realisation of the problem and, respectively, growth of the number of calls.

Hourly distribution of calls

The maximum number of calls in the working hours is registered between 8.00 and 12.00 and drops significantly close to 18.00-20.00 (see Fig. 10). This is due to the fact that persons that suffer from domestic violence prefer to call when they are apart from the aggressor. A bigger number of calls in the morning hours is also explained by the fact that some addressees prefer to call from work, relatives or neighbours, feeling safer there, because the aggressor has limited access to these places.

After 18.00, usually, SOS calls are registered or cases requiring crisis intervention. In the evening, most often, victims of domestic violence and aggressors spend time together.

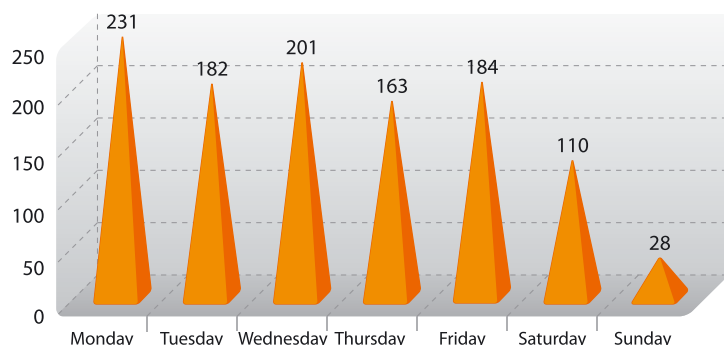
Fig. 10. Hourly distribution of calls (November 2009 — September 2010)



Distribution of calls by weekdays

In general, the TL receives calls throughout the week, but the first 3 days of the week prevail (see Fig. 11).

Fig. 11. Distribution of calls by weekdays (November 2009 — September 2010)



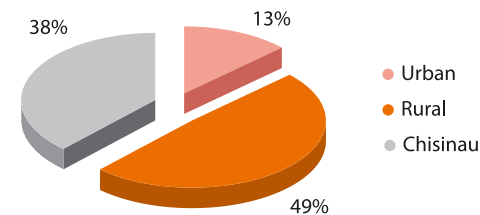
A bigger number of calls (220) is received on Mondays, which is explained, first of all, by the fact that on week-ends the victim and the aggressor spend more time together. There are days intended for parties, meetings with friends, relatives, which immediately involves excessive alcohol consumption. Exactly in these circumstances, tensions between partners become more intensive. On the other hand, a number of Monday addressees say that they had been preparing themselves for the call for many months or weeks, but made the decision to access the TL exactly on Monday.

Decrease in the number of calls on Saturdays and Sundays can be justified by the fact that the victim does not have free access to the telephone because of the aggressor's presence. A relatively small number of calls received on Sunday can be explained also by the fact that the TL started its activity in November with a programme of work from Monday till Saturday. Already starting from April, Sunday was also included in the programme.

Distribution of calls by regions and localities

Uniform distribution of calls from urban areas — 51% (urban areas plus Chisinau) and rural areas — 49% (see Fig. 12) from most of the regions of the Republic of Moldova (see Fig. 13) demonstrates that family violence occurs equally in villages and in towns. This fact is another proof for the fact that violence occurs in different media and does not depend either on the socio-economic or educational level, because it appears in all social strata and at all economic and educational levels.

Fig. 12. Distribution of calls by the urban/rural principle (November 2009 — September 2010)

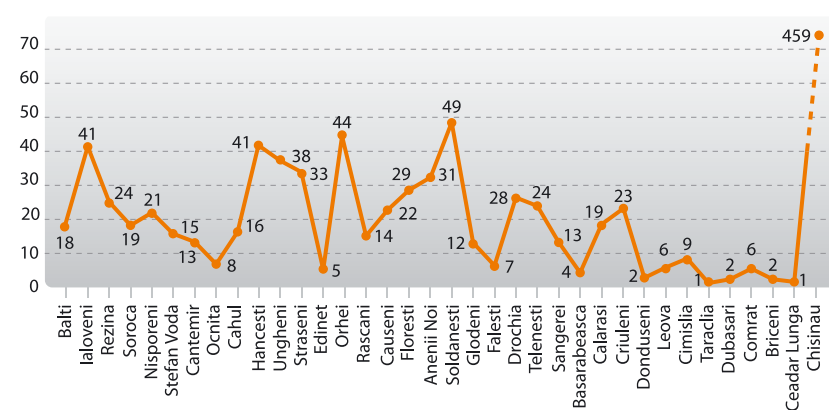


Based on the analysis of calls received from urban and rural areas, we can mark some differences in victims' profiles and their access to necessary assistance. Thus, most of TL women-addressees from rural areas belong to socially-vulnerable strata, have many prejudices/stereotypes related to the role of a woman in the family, are totally dependent on the public opinion. If women from urban areas remain in abusive relations motivating it by the fact that they do not have where to go, then those from rural areas are attached to their households and do not want to leave "a life's work", have a lower legal culture (85%).

As for victims from urban areas, they are more socialised, have more access to information and necessary assistance (legal, psychological services, shelter). At the same time, even in these conditions, persons who suffer from domestic violence need time and preparation to decide on their fate.

It should be noted, that a bigger number of calls is registered from regions adjacent to the Chisinau municipality (Ialoveni, Straseni, Anenii Noi), as many of these addressees have jobs or frequent trips to the capital (see Fig. 13).

Fig. 13. Distribution of calls by locality (November 2009 — September 2010)



Conclusions and recommendations

In the period of November 2009 — September 2010, 1,099 calls were registered at the TL, something that points at the relevance of offering psychological assistance to victims of domestic violence in situations of limited of the population in the Republic of Moldova to professional psychological assistance.

Of the range of psychological consultations offered to TL' women-beneficiaries, we can outline a general picture of actors involved in domestic violence, specific aspects of this phenomenon, as well as the way it is perceived by the population of the Republic of Moldova (persons immediately involved or witnesses). The first analysis of this picture suggests a number of conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusions

1. Calls to the Trust Line for Women confirm the fact that domestic violence is encountered in various social and economic media, as well as at different ages. The more severe and prolonged the violence is, the deeper is the impact on the physical and mental health of the woman and her children.
2. In the Republic of Moldova, violence has a pronounced gender nature, there is even gender violence culture that distorts the family perceptions of future generations — the abuse model is passed through generations. Many victims of domestic violence were brought up in families where violence is a real phenomenon and for this reason they do not even realise that there is another way of behaviour or other ways of resolving conflicts.
3. The society also remains indifferent and too conservative as concerns violence in general, moreover when it comes to domestic violence, in particular.
4. Many of the forms of economic, psychological violence in the family are not reported, because these actions are not considered to be acts of violence. Often, victims, being paralysed by fears related to safety and personal security in the family or outside of it, being marginalised in the society, having no moral and psychological support, are not able to break the vicious circle of violence.
5. Victims have very low self-esteem and self-respect and are much dependent on the aggressor. More than that, some do not even identify themselves as victims, with relatives being those who access the TL. Dependence on the aggressors is preserved even after the divorce or change of the place of residence. At the same time, fear and shame prevents women from speaking openly about their problems.

6. Most women that called to TL recognise the danger of violence that they stand by the time when children implore them to change something. However, one of the most frequent arguments of women that keep relations with violent husbands is directly related to children — when not drunk, he can be a good father, and children need both parents. While being continuously under pressure, most victims try to please the aggressor and to not provoke him.
7. In 80% of the described cases, acts of violence are facilitated by excessive alcohol consumption. Violent discharges are more frequent in families of women-addressees where there is an unwanted child or a child having learning difficulties, a member of the family with a physical or mental disability.
8. Even various social, economical and even somatic reasons are invoked, violence in the family is mostly a issue related to psychological problems (resulted from trauma, frustrations, low self-esteem, lack of some adequate life models etc.)
9. Aggressors that are described by women-addressees do not recognise being aggressors and few of them realise the need of assistance from some specialists. They motivate their aggressive behaviour by lack of stable income, uncertainty of jobs, wife's "provocative" behaviour, and relatives' influence.
10. Another important aspect to be mentioned is that some women-beneficiaries of the Trust Line for Women benefited from relevant assistance at specialised centres that exist in the country (temporary shelter, psychological and legal services). The effect of these interventions was short-term, though.
11. Some women revert to the model of violent family, which resulted in problems at work, children deprived of mother's attention, resumption of aggression with a higher intensity. And this is because in cases of domestic violence, not all members of the family are worked with: parents, children that live the parents' drama rather intensively.
12. Regarding multidisciplinary teams, their presence in only 30 localities of only 5 regions (Rezina, Anenii-Noi, Soldanesti, Vulcanesti and Grigoriopol) does not cover national needs and does not have expected impact.
13. A drawback in the field of prevention and combating domestic violence remains to be training of professional groups that have to intervene in cases of domestic violence according to the law. Specialists are not prepared, very few know Law nr. 45-XVI of 1 March 2007 on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence, they do not know the mechanism of its practical implementation.

Recommendations

1. In the context of the conclusions above, we believe that development of training programmes for young people would be appropriate for the purpose of informing the growing generation on relevant aspects related to prevention of domestic violence: gender aspects, development of communication capacities and adequate manifestation of emotional feelings, personal development etc.
2. In the conditions that have been established, training activities are needed (debriefings, seminars, round-tables) with professional groups for the purpose of raising awareness, exchange of experience and facilitation of cooperation in view of offering efficient assistance to women-beneficiaries in the future.
3. Raising the efficiency of the work of institutions responsible for prevention and combating of domestic violence is imperative; this regards both state agencies — relevant ministries (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family), local public authorities (multidisciplinary teams including a social assistant, healthcare professional, policeman, mayor, school director, priest), as well as nongovernmental organisations. Services for victims of domestic violence have to become much more proactive, flexible and mobile, as appropriate.
4. It is imperative to extend the area of efficient activities of multidisciplinary teams in all regions of the republic while improving the mechanism of their operation to cover as many localities as possible, particularly in the rural area. Otherwise, the activities of promotion of a non-violent way of life will not bring any expected impact in the nearest time.
5. The quality of interventions and significant decrease of the phenomenon of domestic violence will undoubtedly gain momentum if specialised services are established for aggressors, something that does not exist at all in the Republic of Moldova so far.

Domestic violence is a complex phenomenon generated by psychological problems and aggravated by educational, economic and social factors. Nothing but a holistic approach of different actors on local and national level structures can facilitate diminishing of this phenomenon.



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